

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 201430
ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 PRS-01 H-02
SSM-05 SIG-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
PA-02 USIA-15 SP-02 /083 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:REUNDELAND:DP

APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN

S/PRS - MR. CARTER (INFO)

H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)

SSM - MR. MC ANDREW

NEA - MR. COLLUMS

NEA/ARN - MR. REUTHER

NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH

-----029086 240801Z /21

R 240142Z AUG 77

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION SINAI

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

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PAGE 02 STATE 201430

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USCINCEUR

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - AUGUST 23

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR AUGUST 23, 1977:
FYI ONLY, THE OFFICER DOING THE BRIEFING TODAY WAS JOHN
TRATTNER.

Q. YOU TOOK A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS YESTERDAY RELATED TO
FURTHER DETAILS ON ISRAEL'S POSSIBLE USE OF U.S. MILI-
TARY EQUIPMENT IN SOUTHERN LEBANON. DO YOU HAVE ANY
FURTHER DETAILS?

A. WE POSTED THE ANSWERS TO MOST OF THOSE, IF NOT ALL OF
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PAGE 03 STATE 201430

THOSE. THE ANSWER WAS TO QUESTIONS ABOUT THE DETAILS OF
ISRAEL'S USE OF U.S. EQUIPMENT IN THE LEBANESE SITUATION:
WHAT DID THEY INFORM US AND WHEN DID THEY INFORM US?

WE CANNOT GET INTO THE DETAILS OF A DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGE.

THAT ANSWER WAS POSTED THIS MORNING, I BELIEVE.

Q. WELL, WERE THERE NO FURTHER DETAILS ON PRECISELY WHAT
SORTS OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT WERE BEING USED AND HOW?

A. APART FROM WHAT THEY HAVE INFORMED US, I DON'T KNOW.
I DON'T HAVE ANY DETAILS BEYOND THAT.

Q. YESTERDAY WE ASKED ABOUT WHERE THESE PEOPLE KNOWN AS
THE PLO GET THEIR ARMS AND HOW THEY PAID FOR THEM OR
WHETHER THEY PAID FOR THEM. DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING ON THAT
TODAY FOR US?

A. I BROUGHT AN ANSWER IN HERE ESPECIALLY FOR YOU.
(LAUGHTER) AT LEAST, I THINK I DID.

Q. WELL, WHILE YOU'RE DOING IT, WILL YOU TELL US ALSO HOW THE WORD "COMMANDOS" IS EVER APPLIED TO THESE KILLERS? DO YOU EVER GET ANYTHING ON THAT?

A. NO; I'M NOT SURE THAT I WAS ASKED TO GET SOMETHING ON THAT.

Q. HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THE WORD "COMMANDOS"?

A. NO, I DON'T HAVE WHAT I PROMISED MYSELF WHAT I'D BRING IN FOR YOU, BUT I THINK THE ANSWER TO YOUR FIRST QUESTION OF WHERE THE PLO IS SUPPOSED TO BE GETTING ITS WEAPONS FROM -- ?

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PAGE 04 STATE 201430

A. WE DON'T HAVE ANY REALLY PRECISE KNOWLEDGE. THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT SOURCES. AND I THINK A LOT OF THE WEAPONS HAVE BEEN REPORTED AS BEING OF EAST EUROPEAN ORIGIN, BUT I DON'T HAVE ANY PRECISIONS FOR YOU BEYOND THAT.

Q. JOHN, WHEN YOU SAY EUROPEAN, CAN YOU BREAK THAT DOWN A LITTLE BIT? ARE THEY COMING FROM THE SOVIET UNION, FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA -- FROM ALBANIA?

A. I CAN'T.

Q. YOU DON'T KNOW HOW THE PLO IS GETTING THE MONEY TO PAY FOR IT? ARE THEY GETTING IT FROM THE LEBANESE BANKS THAT THEY RIFLED IN BEIRUT?

A. I REALLY DON'T KNOW.

Q. WHAT ABOUT THIS STATEMENT THAT WAS REPORTED TODAY FROM THE GUERRILLA OUTFIT CALLED THE PLO, THAT THEY ARE NOT GOING TO ACCEPT 242, AND THEY SUGGEST TO TALK TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES?

A. I SAW THE STORY. I THINK THE STORY READ THAT IT WAS ANTICIPATED THAT THEY WOULD NOT -- I DON'T THINK ANYTHING HAS HAPPENED YET. IN ANY CASE, I DON'T HAVE A REACTION FOR YOU.

Q. JOHN, IS IT THIS MEETING THE ADMINISTRATION WAS LOOKING TOWARD AS ACCEPTING OR REJECTING THE PRESIDENT'S INVITATION TO THE PLO TO ACCEPT 242?

A. I DON'T KNOW. I HAD HEARD AT ONE POINT DURING THE SECRETARY'S TRIP -- I THINK THE DATE OF AUGUST 16TH
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PAGE 05 STATE 201430

WAS MENTIONED -- BUT I DON'T KNOW WHETHER THIS MEETING
WAS THE SAME AS THAT MEETING.

Q. THE MEETING THE 25TH IN DAMASCUS, THIS THURSDAY?

A. MY ANSWER IS I DON'T KNOW WHETHER THIS IS THE MEETING
THAT WAS REPORTED TO BE THE MEETING IN WHICH A DECISION
ALLEGEDLY MIGHT BE TAKEN. I JUST DON'T KNOW WHETHER THIS
MEETING IS THAT MEETING OR NOT.

Q. ABOUT THIS STATEMENT THAT APPEARED IN THE PAPER, HAS
THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT BEEN GIVEN A COPY OF IT SOME
WAY, THROUGH SOME SOURCE LIKE THE SAUDI ARABIANS OR
SOMETHING LIKE THAT?

A. HAVE WE BEEN GIVEN A COPY? NOT TO MY KNOWLEDGE.

Q. SO, THE ONLY INFORMATION WE HAVE IS THIS THING WE SAW
IN THE PAPER?

A. IT'S A NEWS STORY PURPORTING TO REPORT THE PURPORTED
VIEWS OF A PLO OFFICIAL ABOUT WHAT MAY OR MAY NOT HAPPEN
IN THE FUTURE.

Q. ON THIS COMMANDO BUSINESS, HAS THE STATE DEPARTMENT
EVER USED THE WORD "COMMANDO" IN RELATION TO THE PLO
GUERRILLAS?

A. NOT TO MY KNOWLEDGE.

CHRISTOPHER

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Sent Date: 24-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Event:
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